3: Hockings, E-5 (1962-1963) 1968
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796 824 (412) (418) Kotas especially for this purpose. Sprigs from the branch are distributed, and every man places a small sprig on top of the salt that remains in his basket. A branch is also cut from the hill gooseberry and distributed in exactly the same way.

796 The celebrants now return to their homes, again led by the man from the Great House. Other male members of each family may follow this party, driving the buffaloes and carrying the hoes. Each man in the ceremonial party, however, has to carry his own potful of water, his iron rod, and his basket (which now contains a little salt, the two twigs mentioned, and also a remaining piece of the *'hubbe* that has otherwise been used as a brush). As the men walk they chant *"hau hau,"* an expression of their happiness. When they reach the hamlet they shout *"ki:i:hi,"* which means, "It is finished." Then the party splits up. Each member goes to his calves and gives them a taste of the salty water he has brought back. After that he is ready to enter his house.

There is still more ritual to be performed, however, for the man must enter his house in a prescribed way. As he comes toward the entrance, the oldest woman in the family stands just inside the inner room, leaning out through its doorway in such a way that she can also see through the entrance to the house. As soon as she sees the man coming across the front yard, she asks him three times in succession, "Have all the cattle drunk salt well?" He answers "Yes" each time. During this interchange the man continues walking but his pace is measured so that he will not enter the house until he has said "Yes" for the third time. On reaching the doorway he is careful to step auspiciously across the threshold with the right foot first.

Once inside the house he stands the iron rod against the wall near the door, and then puts the basket of salt on top of the hole in the floor where grain is usually crushed and where the salt was powdered earlier. The woman then comes from the inner room, takes the three sprigs from this basket, and hangs them from the ceiling of the outer room. She carries (263) the basket to the inner room, which is a kitchen and dining room, and she uses up whatever salt remains in cooking a meal. During the whole performance of the salt-giving ceremony she should use no other salt than this. (178) (Nowadays she has generally finished cooking by the time the man returns home, and so just adds a pinch of his salt to the prepared meal.)

The meal which is served at this time to the members of the household (264) differs from ordinary morning meals in certain respects. The man who has represented the family in the salt-giving ceremony is served before everyone else; ordinarily this would only occur when no other adult male members of the family were present. Furthermore, he is served in the outer room of the house, although meals are otherwise eaten in the inner room, where [262] they are cooked. He eats butter first of all; the rice and vegetable curry follow. Afterwards he must wash his hands in cold water; usually he (515) washes in hot.

During the afternoon each of the celebrants carries his pot of water to the cattle pen and there pours it on the ground. Again the man from the

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when they are drinking liquor with the meal. Mutton, pork and chicken and the occasional game animals are either roasted or stewed in a curry. It is said that in the early days mutton was simply burned in the fire for a while, till it was dry.

Salt is generally used in cooking. ("If the curry is saltless, you can add salt; but if the salt has lost its savour, what can you add?") Badaga women also used to salt and dry surplus meat, frying it later when it was needed. The practice has now stopped because hunting has virtually ceased. Dried meat and other foodstuffs which last a long time are generally prepared for use in the rainy season. Tiger flesh, for example, should first be soaked in salty water, and then the pieces left on a roof to dry in the sun for 5-8 days. Tiger, pork, "ibex" and deer meat will spoil if not properly cured, but kept for too long; hence the proverb: "If [dried meat] is threaded and tied it will be spoilt as curry pieces; if it is burnt and eaten the stomach will be spoiled." In pre-British days when men occasionally had to go on long trading expeditions they took a foodstuff prepared from wheat flour, salt and crude sugar, which was cooked by steaming and would keep for months.

Meals

2.3. There are several proverbs that refer to eating, especially to the undesirable effects of over-eating. It is believed a person cannot work well if he eats too often: "A woman who eats once a day will be healthy; a woman who eats twice a day is healthy; a woman eating thrice daily will be chronically sick." And again, "He who controls his eating will not become sick; he who can control his talk will have no fights;" or alternatively, "Too much talking will end up in a quarrel; too much eating will end in short breath" (Metz 1864: 93). Greed is expressed in the adage: "One person is saying there is not even salt for the evening; another is saying [he wants] sugar for the afternoon." Similarly, "When you can afford to wait till the food is prepared, you can't wait till it gets cool." Finally we can cite a proverb referring to the use of wild plants and to dietary differences between the rich and the poor: "If it is eaten by a wealthy man, it is for medicine; if eaten by a poor man, it is because he has nothing else for his stomach." It is felt one should work hard and eat well enough: "If there is mud on the hand, there is curd in the mouth."

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Badagas typically eat twice daily, once in the morning around eight o'clock and then again in the evening (Gaymard 1924: 3).[1] Each meal consists usually of two courses, the first being a curry, probably of vegetables, eaten with rice or millet. The second course, providing a third of the bulk of the meal, is curd or buttermilk. Usually with this latter course people eat a teaspoonful or so of hot lime relish, made with limes, chilies and salt. Despite the ground chilies it is "neutral" in its heating effect, and is said to dispel a disease characterized by dizziness, nausea and vomiting. At other times of the day Badagas "drink coffee, which because of the cold climate is a necessity for them and not a luxury" (Vivekanandam Pillai 1937: 247). The tedium of these meals is relieved by occasional sweets made from crude sugar, honey, or high-quality millets. Fruits are always appreciated too: "Who died by eating a jackfruit? Who expanded by eating a banana?"

The usual meal and its preparation have been described in these terms:

> The women pound regularly every day in their mortars of stone... a kind of millet, which forms the basis of the daily alimentation. The grain thus decorticated is boiled and served. They sit down on the floor...and...with the fingers of the right hand they crush these boiled grains and dip them in a sauce mostly composed of pepper, mustard and coriander; of this spiced mixture they make little balls of which they consume a number according to their appetite.
>
> Sometimes the housewives prepare cakes of cornflour boiled and mixed with honey and milk. Butter is used for seasoning (Tignous 1911: 116-17).

In most Badaga homes each Monday, the weekly holiday, and in the more well-to-do ones on both Mondays and Fridays, a woman should not cook ordinary green vegetables for the curry but make a richer meal, using beans and peas and, if non-vegetarian, some meat for the dish. A similarly rich dish should be prepared for a

[1]Readers who may be confused by my apparent use of an "ethnographic present" here and throughout the book should know that *if I put a statement in the present tense it is to the best of my knowledge currently valid, and if I follow it with a citation date, such as 1924, it was also noted at that time.*